

REMARKS

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Various claims are amended herein.

Claims 1-11 and 22-40 are currently pending.

II. REJECTION OF CLAIMS UNDER 35 USC 103 AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER WALKER IN VIEW OF HOOVER

The present invention as recited, for example, in claim 1, relates to a computer-implemented decision management process for evaluating a customer of an organization having more than one account. The process comprises (a) loading all customer and account data required for evaluating the customer and each of the accounts; and (b) evaluating the customer and each of the accounts via an iterative function which uses the loaded customer and account data.

As recited, for example, in claim 1, the evaluation determines which strategy of a plurality of strategies will be used to evaluate each account via the iterative function based on a type of the account, evaluates each account for a same product or service via the iterative function with the same strategy, and evaluates accounts for different products or services via the iterative function with different strategies.

Moreover, as recited, for example, in claim 1, the loaded customer and account data is loaded at a time prior to the evaluation and is sufficient to evaluate the customer and each of the accounts by the evaluation without loading additional customer or account data.

As an example, in the specific example in FIG.10 of the application, an iterative function (see "next iteration" in FIG. 10) is used to evaluate the customer and each of the accounts. In steps 222 and 224, the type of account is taken into consideration. For example, it is determined what kind of product or service the account is for. In FIG. 10, different strategies are used to evaluate credit card accounts and mortgage accounts, respectively. Via the iterative function in FIG. 10, the process loops back so that each account of the customer is evaluated, with accounts for different products or services being evaluated with different strategies.

Therefore, in the example of FIG. 10, via the use of an iterative function, all the required

customer and account data is loaded, prior to doing the evaluation for the various accounts. The loaded customer and account data is sufficient to evaluate the customer and each of the accounts, without loading additional customer or account data.

Please note that claim 1 specifically recites that the customer and account data is loaded at a time prior to the evaluation.

Moreover, please note that claim 1 recites that the customer and each of the accounts is evaluated via an *iterative function* which uses the loaded customer and account data, and that the loaded customer and account data is sufficient to evaluate the customer and each of the accounts without loading additional customer or account data. See for example, page 17, line 19, through page 18, line 6, of the specification. See also FIGS. 9, 10 and 11.

Claims 26, 28 and 29 include somewhat similar recitations as those described above for claim 1.

Walker relates to processing of applications for products and services offered by a financial institution. See, for example, the Abstract, and column 5, lines 66, through column 6, line 15, of Walker. The overall processing of applications is shown in the flow chart which runs from FIGS. 40-51 of Walker.

However, Walker shows the processing of only a SINGLE application by an applicant. The process does NOT show the processing of multiple applications by the same applicant.

For example, FIGS. 40-51 of Walker show the various processes which are executed to determine if a respective application is accepted. Final processing is shown in FIG. 51. Referring to FIG. 51, after a decision on a processed application is made, customer information is updated in step 2258. Then, the processing ends in step 2260.

It is important to note that the final processing in FIG. 51 of Walker does NOT loop back to FIG. 40 to begin processing of another application of the same applicant. This is significantly different than the present invention, where a plurality of accounts of an applicant are evaluated via an iterative function.

Therefore, Walker does not show the use of an iterative function to evaluate more than one account, as in various embodiments of the present invention.

Moreover, if some type of loop back was considered in Walker, it is unclear where such a loop back would return. For example, steps 2002 to 2006 in FIG. 40 of Walker relate to the loading of customer data. If the system of Walker would require a loop back to steps 2000 or 2002, such a loop back would be significantly different than various claimed embodiments of the

present invention where all the required customer and account data for evaluating a plurality of accounts is loaded, since customer data in Walker would have to be reloaded in the system to evaluate another application. This operation in Walker would be contrary to the present invention as recited, for example, in claim 1. Please note that Walker also retrieves data in other steps, such as in steps 2092 and 2094 in FIG. 43.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Walker does not disclose or suggest the use of an iterative function to evaluate a plurality of accounts of a customer, or the loading of all required customer and account data to evaluate a plurality of accounts of the customer, as in various claimed embodiments of the present invention.

Please note that claim 1 also recites that "said evaluating determines which strategy of a plurality of strategies will be used to evaluate each account via the iterative function based on a type of the account". For example, in operations 222 and 224 in FIG. 10, different strategies are used to evaluate an account based on the type of account.

More specifically, as recited, for example, in claim 1, and as shown in FIG. 10, an iterative function (see "next iteration" in FIG. 10) is used to evaluate the customer and each of the accounts. In steps 222 and 224, the type of account is taken into consideration. For example, it is determined what kind of product or service the account is for. In FIG. 10, different strategies are used to evaluate credit card accounts and mortgage accounts, respectively. Via the iterative function in FIG. 10, the process loops back so that each account of the customer is evaluated, with accounts for different products or services being evaluated with different strategies.

It is respectfully submitted that Walker does not disclose or suggest such features.

* * *

To further distinguish over Walker, claim 1 is amended herein to recite the customer and each of the accounts thereby being evaluated in a "single pass." Similar amendments are made to the other independent claims. A "single pass" indicates that, in the evaluation of a customer, the required customer and account data is retrieved and loaded once, prior to doing the customer evaluation. After the data is loaded, customer and account rules can be run interactively and interchangeably against the data. See for example, page 17, line 19, through page 18, line 6, of the specification.

As described, for example, on page 17, line 19, through page 18, line 6, of the

specification, such use of a single pass is particularly important where a respective customer has many accounts. Thus, the process does not have to run multiple times with dependencies between previous and subsequent occurrences.

* * *

On page 3, lines 4-9 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner asserts that:

"Via on-line real-time integration of the many systems (block 52) involved in the process, all of the existing customer's accounts (each of the customer's accounts, some can be of the same type) are systematically and automatically reviewed (all customer and account data loaded without additional data) during the application session to determine the aggregate balance amount, which gives rise to the best price being offered to the existing customer 10 (evaluating customer) for the requested credit product."

The above quote from the Office Action corresponds to the disclosure in column 9, lines 33-39, of Walker.

However, it is respectfully submitted that this portion of Walker does not disclose or suggest the use of an iterative function in the manner recited, for example, in claim 1 of the present application and shown, for example, in FIG. 10 of the present application.

Instead, the above-described disclosure in Walker relates to various steps in the flow charts of FIGS. 40-51 of Walker. For example, the above-described disclosure in Walker refers to block 52. Step 2006 in FIG. 40 of Walker specifically includes the notation "AS ILLUSTRATED IN FIGURE 1 BLOCK 52".

However, not all data is loaded in step 2006 of FIG. 40 of Walker. For example, Walker continues to load additional required data throughout any evaluation process in Walker. For example, Walker also retrieves data in steps 2092 and 2094 in FIG. 43.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Walker does not load *all* customer and account data required for evaluating the customer and each of the accounts *prior to* initiating the evaluation *without loading additional customer or account data*.

Please note that claim 1 is amended herein to further clarify that the data is loaded prior to "initiating" the evaluation. Similar amendments are made to independent claims 26, 28 and 29.

Moreover, the above-described portion of Walker simply indicates that Walker determines the best price to offer an existing customer for a requested credit product. This

portion of Walker does not disclose or suggest that a decision is produced for each account of the customer.

Please note that independent claim 1 is amended herein to recite a respective decision being produced for each of the accounts. Similar amendments are made to independent claims 23, 26, 28 and 29. See, for example, decisions D1 through D8 in FIG. 10 of the present application.

* * *

In item 3 on page 6 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner asserts that there is very little specification support for the term "strategy" and that the Examiner has given very broad meaning to this term.

Page 17, lines 12-14, of the specification, indicate that a single strategy "is typically defined by a decision tree in conjunction with other functions (such as matrices, outbound events)."

The concept of a "strategy" is known, and Walker does show a strategy.

However, the present application does not simply claim a strategy. Instead, the present application relates to the use of an iterative function to evaluate a customer and accounts in a single pass, in accordance with all the features recited, for example, in claim 1.

For example, as indicated on page 17, lines 12-14, of the specification, according to embodiments of the present invention, a single strategy "can simply be defined once and then reiterated through for each of the different accounts of the same type. As a result, in a single pass, all customer and account data can be analyzed and appropriate action can be taken."

* * *

In the Office Action, the Examiner refers to the Maximum Debt Burden Offer of Walker.

The Maximum Debt Burden Offer is disclosed, for example, in column 7, line 57, through column 8, line 24, of Walker. As specifically disclosed in column 8, lines 17-24, of Walker, the Maximum Debt Burden Offer refers to:

a maximum loan or line dollar amount whose associated monthly payment, when added to the monthly payment amounts for the applicant's existing debts and rent or mortgage payment, divided by the customers' monthly income, creates a debt burden ratio (such as 45%) that is specified in the product parameters. If the

maximum debt burden amount is negative or not used because amount requested is less than designated parameter (e.g., \$2,500), the amount assigned to Maximum Debt Burden Offer will default to product minimum.

Therefore, generally, Walker simply uses the total debt payments to determine an amount that can be loaned to an applicant. Such debt payments might include, for example, credit card debt and mortgage debt.

However, this disclosure in Walker does not indicate the use of an iterative function to evaluate each account of a customer for a same product or service via the same strategy and evaluate accounts of the customer for different products or services with different strategies as recited, for example, in claim 1. For example, as indicated above, Walker shows the processing of only a SINGLE application by an applicant. The process does NOT show the processing of multiple applications by the same applicant.

* * *

In the Office Action, the Examiner asserts that Walker shows a series of look-up tables which are iteratively used in the process of Walker. Therefore, the Examiner correlates the look-up tables of Walker to the iterative function of the claimed invention.

The look-up tables of Walker are disclosed, for example, in column 9, line 66, through column 10, line 13, of Walker. From this disclosure in Walker, it appears that the look-up tables are used simply as a relational tool to access stored data, such as in a relational database model. Such use of look-up tables is significantly different than the use of an iterative function of the claimed invention. More specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the look-up tables of Walker do not indicate the use of an iterative function to evaluate each account of a customer for a same product or service with the same strategy and evaluate accounts of the customer for different products or services with different strategies as recited, for example, in claim 1. Instead, the look-up tables of Walker simply indicate that data can be stored and accessed in a relational manner.

* * *

Hoover describes an "object-based relational distributed database system and associated methods of operation that transforms data stored in a plurality of remote, heterogeneous user databases into a homogeneous data model." See, for example, the

Abstract of Hoover.

However, in view of the comments above with respect to Walker, and the amendments made herein, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention is patentable over the combination of Walker and Hoover.

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In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is overcome.

III. **CONCLUSION**

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

If any further fees are required in connection with the filing of this response, please charge such fees to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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